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FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2575
INFO RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 3675
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 2736
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY 5318
RUEHMK/AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY 2939
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 3957
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 8578
RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA PRIORITY 1125
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0420
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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 000117

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STATE FOR NEA/MAG, IO/UNP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/30/2010
TAGS: [KPKO](#) [MO](#) [PBTS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: WESTERN SAHARA: FASSI FIHRI ON JANUARY 18
SECURITY COUNCIL BRIEFING

REF: A. RABAT 115

- [1](#)B. STATE 8207
- [1](#)C. USUN 103

Classified By: Ambassador Thomas T. Riley for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) During a January 19 meeting covering UN reform (septel) and Iran (Ref A), Deputy FM Fassi Fihri raised the Western Sahara, noting that he was "surprised" by remarks attributed to Ambassador Bolton at the Security Council's closed door briefing on the Western Sahara on January 18 "blaming" Morocco for the political impasse. Fassi Fihri said he had spoken to Moroccan PermRep Bennouna about the meeting (though Bennouna was not present), and had understood that Bolton had commented that Morocco had rejected every proposal since the Settlement Plan. Fassi Fihri said Bolton's comments were not sympathetic to Morocco and not "gentil" (nice). (Note: Ambassador had only a cursory read-out of the Western Sahara discussion at the time of the Fassi Fihri meeting and was not in a position to refute Fassi Fihri's off-target comments. Upon reading Ref C, received January 23, Embassy Rabat sees no speaker at the event specifically singling out Morocco, or any other party for that matter, for blame over the political stalemate. End Note).

[1](#)2. (C) Fassi Fihri continued that the discussion on MINURSO at the January 18 meeting was not surprising or new to Morocco. Morocco agreed that the status quo was unacceptable. Fassi Fihri understood that Van Walsum would not be proposing a new peace plan, and that the UN would ask for direct negotiations between the parties. Morocco agreed to negotiations, but Algeria must participate.

[1](#)3. (C) Ambassador responded that he understood Van Walsum had given a clear and effective presentation. Fassi Fihri said he heard that the UK Ambassador had spoken of the need to respect the principle of self-determination, but that Morocco believed the UK also knew well the "reality."

[1](#)4. (C) Fassi Fihri said that Morocco was prepared to discuss its next autonomy proposal with the US, as soon as it was ready. He understood the State Department was giving a lot of thought to the issue of autonomy, and it would be interesting for Morocco and the US to exchange views. Fassi Fihri said Morocco's next autonomy plan would contain

"nothing very new" beyond what Morocco had presented earlier
and that the US had already seen.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/rabat>

Riley